



DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILIES
Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities



MEMORANDUM

TO: All Staff

FROM: Kristine D Ragaglia, J.D. , DCF Commissioner

DATE: April 12, 2002

RE: **THE SAFE HARBOR PROJECT**

As a child welfare agency, the Department is committed to meeting the needs of all of the children we serve in a culturally competent and affirming manner. As a part of this commitment I would like to inform you that in September of 2001 we established a partnership with True Colors, Inc. Sexual Minority Youth and Family Services of Connecticut to create **The Safe Harbor Project**. This project was developed to address the unique needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) youth and families.

There are four specific components of this project. They include:

- The establishment of a joint DCF staff and community provider's steering committee tasked with identifying and resolving gaps in service for LGBT youth in our care.
- Foster parent recruitment and outreach designed to create safe, affirming homes for adolescents regardless of their sexual orientation. These efforts are currently being facilitated through our Office of Foster Care and Adoption Services (OFAS) and the Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents (CAFAP).
- Mentoring designed to provide guidance and direction for LGBT youth or LGBT questioning youth.
- Training designed to ensure culturally competent, unbiased services for LGBT or LGBT questioning youth in our care.

We have already experienced notable progress in our efforts to address the concerns of these youth, however additional changes are forthcoming. If you would like to know more about **The Safe Harbor Project**, contact David Brennan, Safe Harbor Project Liaison at 860-550-6421.

KDR/wr

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